



G R A C E

REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

SOLI ◇ DEO ◇ GLORIA

## THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

### Sermon Notes

#### *The Coming of the Holy Spirit*

John 14:15-17

April 2, 2006

### BACKGROUND

- ❑ The Gospel of John gives the reader the greatest understanding of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit, compared to the Synoptics.
- ❑ Theologians often refer to the five *Paraclete* passages here in the Gospel of John:
  - 14:16-17
  - 14:26
  - 15:26-27
  - 16:7-11
  - 16:12-15

### Verse 15

- ❑ Jesus says, “If you love me, you will keep My commandments.”
- ❑ In Chapter 13, Jesus revealed His love for His disciples by washing their feet; He then told them to love one another by doing the same.
- ❑ Now is the first time in this Gospel that Jesus talks of the love the disciples have for Him.
- ❑ This Verse is consistent with another work by John the Evangelist: “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments...” (1 John 5:3).
- ❑ This Verse is a *conditional* statement...**if** you love me.
- ❑ The verb “love” here is in the Present Tense, which is important. The Present Tense indicates Present **continual** action. Therefore, we are being called to love God *continually*.
- ❑ The condition is followed by a future statement of fact: you **will keep my commandments**.
- ❑ Yet, what are the “commands” of God?

- Simply put, they are the totality of revelation of God, which reflect His very character.
- Remember, Jesus responds, when asked what the greatest commandment is in the Law, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”
- Ezekiel 36:26-27 promises, “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. **I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.**”
- Also, Jeremiah 31:31, 33: “ ‘Behold, days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah... ‘But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,’ declares the LORD, **‘I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it;** and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

**Therefore, those who have been born again of the Spirit of God DESIRE to obey the commands of God because they are “written” on their hearts. In other words, for the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, the commandments of God are, in a sense, a part of him or her.**

**This is why 1 John 5:3 ends by stating, “...and His commandments are not burdensome.”**

- Therefore, what is your *feeling* concerning the commandments? Do you have a *minimalist* approach to them? In other words, do you think, “What is minimum [‘law-keeping’] that I must accomplish?”
- “What the one who loves Jesus will observe is not simply an array of discrete ethical injunctions, but the entire revelation from the Father, revelation holistically conceived.”  
D.A. Carson
- Historically, one of the accusations leveled against the Reformed tradition is that of *antinomianism*. This word comes from two words: (1) *anti* (against) and (2) *nomos* (Greek, νομος), meaning “law.” In other words, it means “**anti-law**.”
  - Basically, what people often ask is, “If you are predestined, and salvation has absolutely nothing to do with your works, then you can do anything you want to do (i.e. disobey the law)...or why evangelize?”
  - However, questions like this are actually somewhat **incriminating to the individual asking the very question**.
  - For, as born-again believers in the New Covenant, we:
    - No longer have a heart of stone, but a **heart of flesh**.

- The **Spirit is within** us.
- The Spirit **causes us to walk in His statutes**.
- The **Law is within us and is written on our hearts** (i.e. it is a part of us).

**Therefore, we DESIRE to obey the commandments of God, even if they do not immediately make sense to us! Law-keeping becomes a JOY!**

- On another level, when we love someone, to include another person, we begin to love what they love, desire what they desire, for love is ultimately self-less. This is also true (but to an even greater extent) with our relationship with Almighty God.

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- Notice how this Verse corresponds with the previous one and the next one:

**If we love God, we will desire to [continually] keep His commandments, and, as such, we will ask Him, in His name to do so [because this is what we desire]; and He will do it *through* the power of the Holy Spirit [the Paraclete].**

**Verse 17**

- Then Jesus says, “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper...”
- It appears here that the Holy Spirit is given by the Father “at the Son’s request.”
  - However, in other places, we see that the Holy Spirit is given by the Father in the Son’s name (14:26); given by Christ from the Father (15:26); proceeds from the Father (15:26); or is sent by Christ (16:7).
  - These truths (that Scripture says the Holy Spirit is given by the Father and the Son) once again point to the intimacy between the Father and the Son.
- Jesus says that “I will ask the Father, and He will give...”
  - Notice, the Father **will give** Jesus what He asks for because Jesus is ALWAYS in perfect accord and obedience with the will of the Father; and if you ask anything in accordance with His will, it will be granted.
- The Father “will give you **another Helper...**”
  - The Greek states, *allon parakleton* (allon paraklhton).
  - There two primary words in the Greek for “another”: *allon* (allon) and *heteros* (eteroc).
  - *heteros* means “another of a different kind”; whereas, *allon* means “another of the same kind.”
  - Therefore, it is as though Jesus is saying, “the Father will give you another Helper of the same kind.”

- This statement is certainly significant, as it emphasizes the equality of the Persons of the Trinity (Godhead).
  - The Holy Spirit is another (PERSON) of the same kind (ESSENCE).
  - Historically, the Church has declared that there is one God, that is ONE ESSENCE (Greek: *ousia*, οὐσία; Latin: *substantia*); and THREE PERSONS.
  - Therefore, the “kind” (of “another of the same kind”) is His ESSENCE or *ousia*. Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit (along with the Father) are each FULLY GOD, EQUAL IN ESSENCE.
- ❑ The word interpreted “Helper” in the NASB [“Counselor” in NIV; “Comforter” in KJV; “Helper” in ESV; “Helper” in NKJV] is difficult to translate.
  - ❑ Unfortunately, it does not seem that any of the English translations of the Greek word **Paraclete** are fully accurate.
  - ❑ The word “Counselor” seems to bring to mind modern perceptions of counseling (marriage counseling, etc.), and indicates a sort of mental, emotional, or psychological assistant.
  - ❑ The word “Comforter” seems to have similar problems – it seems to address primarily emotional needs.
  - ❑ Finally, the word “Helper” often refers to someone of subordinate status, aiding an individual who has a set agenda, purpose, or will.
  - ❑ This may be one of those cases in Scripture where the transliteration **Paraclete** should be used, and the reader understand the title in light of the context.
    - The term Paraclete encompasses several meanings all at once:
      - A legal advocate who aids another in court;
        - 1 John 2:1 uses a cognate Paraclete, and it states, “And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous...”
      - A witness/representative that testifies or speaks on behalf of an individual;
      - One who comforts through strengthening, encouraging, aiding.
    - The term, Paraclete cannot be limited to just one of these; but rather, it should include them all.
    - **However, the meaning of Paraclete should be understood in light of the phrase “another Paraclete [of the same kind]”**

- In other words, the Paraclete will perform the role Jesus did while He was here on earth: Teacher, Encourager, Comforter, Helper, Exhorter.
- Then, Jesus says, "...that He may be with you forever..."
- Unlike the physical presence of Jesus, the presence of the Paraclete will be **everlasting**.

### Verse 18

- Jesus immediately, in this Verse, calls the Paraclete, the "spirit of truth."
  - In other words, the Spirit, like Jesus IS Truth (John 14:6).
  - Also, the Spirit will teach and lead believers in all truth.
  - Further, the Holy Spirit will never contradict the Word of God, the revealed truth.
    - How many times do we hear Christians claim, "I *feel* led to \_\_\_\_\_" yet, what they claim to be led to do is in direct contradiction to the Word of God?
- Jesus, then, states, "whom the world **cannot receive**, because it does not see Him or know Him."
  - As we have seen before, this is a statement of ability.
  - The world does not have the ability to receive the Holy Spirit because it/they have not been "born again" by the Holy Spirit and, therefore, **cannot see the kingdom of God**. Furthermore, because they have not been born again, they do not have a relationship with the living God and do not know Him.
- Jesus concludes by stating, "**But you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.**"
  - So, as Jesus speaks to His disciples (before His death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost), the Holy Spirit abides or **remains with** His disciples.
  - Yet, after the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, He will remain in them.
- It appears that, from Jesus' perspective, the presence of the Holy Spirit is greater, in a sense, to the physical presence of Jesus [during His earthly ministry].
  - The reason for this is two-fold: (1) Unlike Jesus, the Holy Spirit will abide **in the believer**; and (2) The presence of the Holy Spirit will be **eternal**. Unlike the physical presence of Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry.
- Unfortunately, the disciples, and most Christians today do not understand this.
- Is there anything we as Christians take for granted more than the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?

- ❑ One scholar [Schnackenburg] notes that today “consciousness of the presence of the Spirit has to be a very great extent disappeared, even in the believing community.”
- ❑ This truth points to our pride and self-sufficiency which has blinded us to the necessity of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. For the one who is daily in the Word of God, and in prayer before Him, realizes who he [the individual Christian] is and understands his complete and total dependence upon the Holy Spirit for everything and, therefore, does not take Him for granted.
- ❑ However, may we realize that the presence of the Holy Spirit is to **be experienced**. Otherwise, the context of this passage means nothing (Jesus is comforting His disciples in light of His imminent departure).
- ❑ This is one area where Reformed believers may have reacted too much to abuses concerning the Person of the Holy Spirit in some Christian circles.
- ❑ The physical presence and ministry of Jesus Christ while He walked this earth was a mere foreshadowing of the constant, eternal abiding of the Holy Spirit in the post-Pentecost believer.
- ❑ However, the abiding of the Holy Spirit with us today is also a foreshadowing itself, of that day when we will proclaim, “the tabernacle of God is among men, and He dwells among them, and they are His people, and God Himself is among them, and He wipes away every tear from their eyes; and there is no longer be any death; there is no longer any mourning, or crying, and or pain...” (Revelation 21:3-4)